

CLASSIFICATION TITLE- SUB-TITLE

Initial Assessment Specialist / Initial Assessment

POSITION SUMMARY

Under close, progressing to limited supervision of the Initial Assessment Supervisors in the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS), Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Initial Assessment Specialist – Entry level is an in-training position that provides child welfare access and initial assessment services for children and families in Milwaukee in accordance with the State of Wisconsin Access and Initial Assessment Standards, Safety Intervention Standards and Statutes. This position, under the guidance and monitoring of an Initial Assessment Supervisor and/or Mentor and after the required training has been completed, assists with conducting assessments of alleged child abuse and neglect, which includes interviews with all household members and home visits to gather information about the presenting situation/alleged maltreatment, child functioning, adult functioning, disciplinary practices, general parenting practices and family functioning. This position may provide consultative services, intervention, and treatment services to clients and members of their families to aid them in achieving a more satisfactory adjustment of their specific problems or situation.

This position works in close cooperation with other social service agencies, hospitals, clinics, courts and community resources in planning to meet the needs of children and families and assist them in utilizing these resources. The incumbent may participate in conferences and meetings for purposes of assessment, diagnosis and safety decision making.

This position is required to participate in 24-hour on-call rotation to ensure continuous provision of access and initial assessment services.

(Rated PD
Only)

<u>TR1</u>	<u>TR2</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>GOALS AND WORKER ACTIVITIES</u>
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		55%	A. Assist with the performance of Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment duties and responsibilities.
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Access Duties

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">A1. Receive reports of alleged child abuse and neglect from a variety of community reporters by telephone, fax, email, letter, or by referral from other agencies such as police departments, or schools, etc.A2. Gather information from the reporters and collateral contacts and assist the reporters and collateral contacts in providing necessary information.A3. Review all information in order to assist in determining the type and immediacy of the child protective services response.A4. Assist in the provision of appropriate community resource referral information to the reporters and collateral contacts.A5. Assist in the provisions of information to the reporters, collateral contacts, and other professionals about the responsibilities associated with child protective services. |
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Assessment Duties

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">A6. Assist in the performance of diligent search efforts and document methods used to locate family members for face-to-face contact within the response time assigned on each referral assigned. |
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- A7. Under the guidance and monitoring of an Initial Assessment Supervisor or Mentor, assist with explaining the purpose of child protective services assessments to the family, developing an understanding of the family's perspective of child protective services involvement, and discussing with the family their rights and responsibilities related to child protective services involvement.
- A8. Under the guidance and monitoring of an Initial Assessment Supervisor or Mentor, assist with conducting initial assessments of alleged child abuse and neglect referrals and child welfare referrals which include interviews with all household members and home visits to gather information about the presenting situation/alleged maltreatment, child functioning, adult functioning, disciplinary practices, general parenting practices and family functioning.
- A9. Assist in the identification and collection of relevant collateral sources of information on each assigned case in order to assist in an objective process of information collection across all areas of assessment.
- A10. Review information/data gathered to assist in determining if a child is safe in his or her home, and whether or not any maltreatment occurred.
- A11. Establish and document efforts used on each case to identify the relationship of all non-custodial parents to the children; most notably, non-household fathers, and attempts to engage these parents in the assessment process when possible.
- A12. Under the guidance and monitoring of the Initial Assessment Supervisor or Mentor, assist with performing an analysis in order to determine the least intrusive, yet sufficient, child protective services intervention, including:
- Connecting the family to appropriate community resources when children are safe in their homes and no further child welfare involvement is necessary;
 - Developing and implementing an in-home safety plan, and then referring the family to services designed to assist the family in keeping a child safe in his or her home, or;
 - Removing a child from his or her home and placing him or her in out-of-home care, if necessary, in order to ensure child safety.
- A13. Assist with following through on referrals to community resources and/or ongoing case management services, including writing court petitions and preparation of written and oral testimony in Children's Court, deemed necessary to ensure child safety. This also includes ensuring the scheduling, completion, and documentation of Foster Care Health Screens within two business days of children being taken into Temporary Physical Custody.
- A14. Assist in conducting the Family Case Transition Meeting to assure mutual understanding of continued child welfare involvement when cases transfer to intensive in-home or ongoing case management services with either an in-home or out of home safety plan. Ensure the engagement of family's informal supports throughout the Initial Assessment process.
- A15. Participate in 24 hour on-call rotation to ensure continuous provision of the Access and Initial Assessment role within Milwaukee County.

35%

B. Maintenance and management of records and documentation.

- B1. With the guidance and monitoring of the Initial Assessment Supervisor or Mentor, maintain current documentation on all contacts, information gathered, decision-making steps, and other child protective services casework responsibilities performed at Access or at assessment. Documentation is to be completed within three business days of occurrence.
- B2. Under the guidance of the Initial Assessment Supervisor or Mentor, prepare reports, forms, and other documentation as required/requested. Close cases within 60 days of receipt of the initial report
- B3. Close cases within 60 days of receipt of the initial report

10%

C. Miscellaneous Other Duties

- C1. Participate in all staffing, unit and team meetings.
- C2. Attend in-service and other training to maintain best practice standards and child protective services knowledge, skills, and practice standards
- C3. Maintain professional demeanor and conduct.
- C4. Participate in any assigned Milwaukee Child Protective Services System committees or other related projects.

KR1 KR2 KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

1. Possession of or eligibility to obtain a valid Wisconsin driver's license and the ability to meet DOA Fleet standards.
2. Ability to successfully complete DMCW Initial Assessment Certification.
3. Knowledge of the principles and practices of applicable professional code of ethics.
4. Knowledge of family systems theory, child and family development, crisis intervention theory and the dynamics of child abuse and neglect with a strength based approach to working with children families.
5. Knowledge of current social and economic problems and ways in which these problems affect individuals and families.
6. Ability to analyze and apply laws, regulations and best practices pertaining to federal and state human service programs, particularly those laws relating to child welfare.
7. Skill in the interpretation and application of training, instructional and procedural materials.
8. Knowledge of human service and health resources (locally and nationally).
9. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships within the agency, contracted partner agencies, other social service agencies, courts, schools, public officials, professionals and the community.
10. Ability to work with a culturally diverse population.
11. Ability to work varying shifts including nights, weekends and holidays.
12. Ability to identify and recognize changes in human behavior including non-verbal and verbal cues.
13. Ability to maintain accurate, current case record documentation and prepare clear, concise reports based on documentation of case information and practice.
14. Ability to handle crisis and stressful situations that involve the well-being and protection of children and families as well as individual personal safety (both physical and mental).
15. Ability to conduct interviews, and gathering, synthesizing and analyzing information/data to form a conclusion.
16. Ability to plan and organize work in an effective and timely manner.
17. Knowledge and proficiency in the use of computers, internet searches, social media, smartphone devices and other software packages (e.g., Word, Excel, Outlook, etc.).

Physical Requirements:

This position's responsibilities include conducting home visits, which requires the ability to navigate a variety of residences, including walking up and down stairs, navigating narrow hallways and/or spending time in a residence void of comfortable temperature.

The requirements of this position require the ability to stoop, bend, reach, kneel, squat, and to lift and carry young children (up to 40 lbs.).